

## FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL.

SATURDAY, Dec. 21.

The room trading speculators who all through last week and up to Wednesday of this week sold stocks continuously for the decline continued to-day the process that they began in the middle of the week of recovering the stocks that they had sold. This was all there was to the day's security market. Advances in prices, although general, were not as large as they were yesterday and the market was almost wholly devoid of individual feature. The Distillers Securities shares dropped nearly three points at the opening of business following the announcement made late yesterday afternoon that the management of the company had decided to reduce the quarterly dividend on the stock from 15 $\frac{1}{2}$  to one-half of 1 per cent., but the final quotation for the shares was, nevertheless, at only a fractional net recession. Consolidated Gas stock reacted a little from its sharp upsurge yesterday, although the character of the decision rendered by Judge J. Hough in the United States District Court in the suit brought by the company to restrain the operation of the 80-cent gas law was rightly considered in Wall Street to be a mere far-reaching and salutary pronouncement that was commonly estimated yesterday from the brief summaries of the decision that were then published. Transactions in the Reading shares furnished, as they have for many days past, nearly one-fourth of the day's total dealings in stocks. Although rough for cable sterling again rose to-day, the demand for mail remittances of sterling bills fell off as much as the time has now passed when transactions of this sort can take place by post in time to be of value in the approaching London yearly settlements. "As much weight as any single influence in the day's market was the general impression that the weekly bond statement due to appear after midday would make an extremely favorable showing, and forecastors voiced their expectation at one time that the deficit in the surplus reserve would be reduced in the large sum of \$100,000. Such a guess were not borne out by the event, although the bank return was the best evidence of its kind that has been made since the cancellation of the recent financial disturbance. There was shown a decrease in the loans of \$9,881,000, an increase in bank cash of \$2,507,000, and a decrease in the deficit in the surplus reserves, therefore, of \$1,356,000. These figures indicated plainly enough that recuperative forces in the financial situation are steadily progressing even if they are not working with the great quickness that it was at one time predicted they would. The trust companies that were helped through their difficulties are paying off their loans to the banks in a very satisfactory way, and though local institutions are still compelled to send money daily to out-of-town banks their losses in this way are being more than made up through gold imports.

A matter, however, in regard to the money situation proper that may become important in the next few weeks is the necessity of a certain amount of withdrawals of Government money from depository banks. The working balance of the Government actually in hand is now only about \$11,000,000, and in the first part of the year the Government must make unusually heavy expenditures. The tendency is running very strong at the moment for the Government revenues to decrease. The president of the Distillers Securities Company yesterday in a statement made accompanying the explanation given, by him of the reduction in the company's dividend called attention to the fact that the Government's receipts through internal taxation at the one point of Peoria, Ill., had fallen in the month of November from \$4,000,000 to \$3,500,000, while the decrease of \$9,000,000 in the value of the country's imports last month attested also to the current falling off in the aggregate amount of customs collections. In general in the financial district during the week the attention of the people in the higher banking circles seemed to rest rather particularly upon the subject of pending business contraction. The statement of earnings and expenditures of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company for the month of November, issued to-day, told of an increase in gross earnings of \$72,500 changed into a net decrease of \$44,448, and a showing of the company's business with which the company's business has been reduced. It was trustworthily understood to-day that the company now has idle in its yards 5,200 freight cars, whereas all were in use thirty days ago. It is also very evident that the shutting down of manufacturing plants the country over on account of the Christmas holidays will be of unusually prolonged and thorough character. The entire working force of the American Brass Company, for instance, will be laid off on Tuesday next until after New Year's Day, a species of suspension that has not taken place before for very many years. There are, however, two manifest compensations in this regard. One of them is the fact that the more rapid a general business contraction is the more quickly will accumulations of money occur in banks and other places of deposit and the more speedily, consequently, the return of the financial position to a normal basis. The other is the circumstance, which it seems is peculiar to the present case, that stocks of unsold goods throughout the country are small. Manufacturers are suffering to some extent by having on hand a certain quantity of raw materials for which they paid prices higher than the present market valuations. But there has been very little heaping up of manufactured articles proper in the hands of retailers. These retailers have in recent months drawn heavily on their stocks, instead of ordering advanced supplies from manufacturers, as they ordinarily do, and the result of this will be, very likely, that when business revives it will do so with no little suddenness.

**New York Stock Exchange Sales, Dec. 21.**

**CLOSING PRICES OF UNITED STATES BONDS.**

**Bid. Asked.** **Bid. Asked.** **Bid. Asked.**

U.S. 10% 102 $\frac{1}{2}$  102 $\frac{1}{2}$  102 $\frac{1}{2}$

U.S. 5% 101 $\frac{1}{2}$  101 $\frac{1}{2}$  101 $\frac{1}{2}$

U.S. comp. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$  10 $\frac{1}{2}$  10 $\frac{1}{2}$

U.S. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  1 $\frac{1}{2}$  1 $\$